

Claims

- 1.- A method for integrally applying a relief decoration (39) to a portion of the surface of solid extruded elongate members (7) of predetermined profile, comprising the steps of
 - 5 a) pre-heating at least a portion of a first surface (41, 45) of an elongate member (7) by means of a pre-heater (43),
 - b) applying a relief decoration (39) to a surface of the elongate member (7) by pressing in a mould (57),
 - 10 c) measuring a structural defect of the elongate member (7) with applied relief decoration (39), thus generating deformity measurement signal, and
 - d) controlling the pre-heating in response to the measurement signal so as to eliminate or diminish the structural defect in subsequent elongate members to which a relief decoration is applied.
- 2.- The method according to claim 1, wherein the defect is a camber.
- 15 3.- The method according to claim 1, wherein the defect is a surface defect in the relief decoration.
- 4.- The method according to claim 3, wherein the defect is an incomplete or deformed relief.
- 5.- The method according to claim 3, wherein the surface deformity is crazing.
- 20 6.- The method according to claim 1, wherein the preheating step is by infra-red radiation or by convection heating.
- 7.- The method according to claim 1, wherein the pre-heating step includes pre-heating a second surface of the elongate member.
- 8.- The method according to claim 7, wherein the controlling step includes selectively
 - 25 controlling the heat energy applied to the first and/or second surface.
- 9.- An installation (1) for integrally applying a relief decoration (39) to a portion of the surface of solid extruded elongate members (7) of predetermined profile, comprising
 - 30 a) a first pre-heater (43) comprising a first bank of heaters (47, 49) for selectively pre-heating at least a portion of first surface of an extruded elongate member

(7);

- b) a press (51) comprising at least one mould cavity (59) and/or mould plug (61) for applying the desired relief decoration (39) to a surface of the elongate member (7),
 - 5 c) a measurement system (67) for measuring a structural defect of the ornamented elongate member and for generating a defect measurement signal,
 - d) pre-heater control means (69) for controlling the heating of the pre-heater (43) in response to the defect measurement signal.
- 10.- Installation according to claim 9, further comprising a second bank of second pre-
- 10 heaters for selectively pre-heating at least a portion of a second surface of the elongate member.
- 11.- Installation (1) according to claim 9, wherein the pre-heater is a radiation heater.
- 12.- Installation (1) according to claim 9, wherein the pre-heater is a convection heater.
- 13.- Installation (1) according to claim 9, characterised in that the press (51) is a hot
- 15 stamp press with a lower platen (53) and an upper platen (55) provided with a mould (57).
- 14.- Installation according to claim 9, further comprising a calliper for holding the ornamented elongate member after it is taken from the press in a predefined shape until cool.
- 20 15.- Installation according to claim 9, wherein the measurement system comprises means for measuring a camber.
- 16.- Installation according to claim 9, wherein the measurement system comprises means for measuring a surface defect in the relief decoration.
- 17.- Installation according to claim 16, wherein the measurement system comprises
- 25 means for measuring an incomplete or deformed relief.
- 18.- Installation according to claim 16, wherein the measurement system comprises means for measuring surface crazing.